

VITAL TRUTHS *for* HUNGRY HEARTS

REV. J. W. WELLONS

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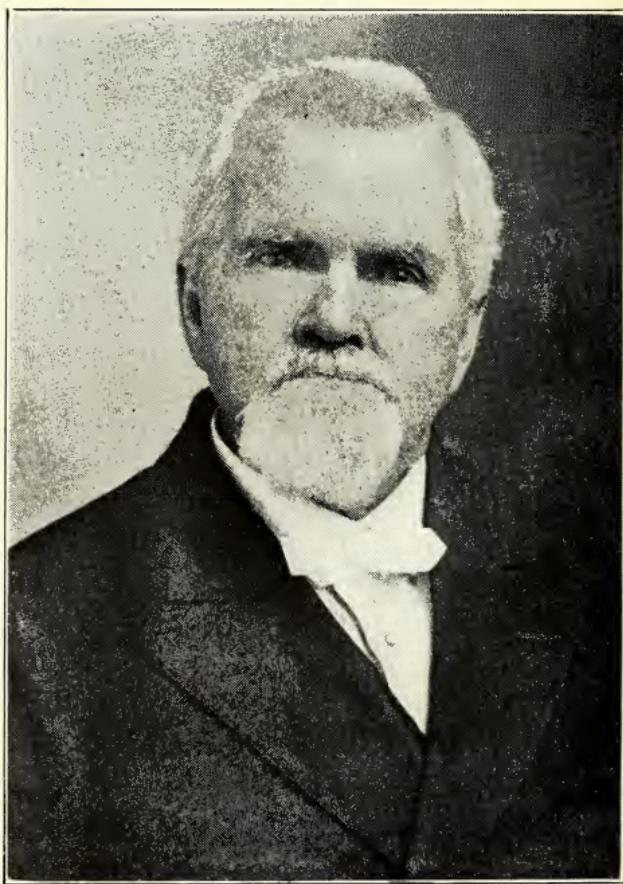






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VITAL TRUTHS FOR HUNGRY HEARTS



By

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Wellons' Family Prayers

Life and Labors of Rev. W. B. Wellons, D. D.

History of the Wellons Family

Wellons' Family Devotion, etc.



Active in the Ministry of the Christian Church, as a member of the North Carolina and Virginia Christian Conference, for more than sixty years, beginning October, 1854.



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PREFACE

brotherhood, and if so, then let me sum it all up in this way:

To old and young, to preacher and church member alike:

Preach the word, live the gospel, and win souls for Christ, remembering that he that winneth souls is wise, and shall shine as the stars forever and ever.—*Daniel 12:3.*

In closing this preface, I have to acknowledge my profound gratitude to my dear friend and brother in Christian service, Rev. J. Pressley Barrett, D. D., Editor of *The Herald of Gospel Liberty*, Dayton, Ohio, for his many invaluable suggestions in the matter of arranging material, for carefully reading the manuscript before given to the printer, and also for reading the last cast of the proof sheets, thus with his trained eye relieving the printed page almost if not entirely of typ-

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graphical errors. And to Dr. J. O. Atkinson, too, I am indebted for most valuable suggestions and assistance at every stage of the book's production. Largely to the painstaking care and lively interest in the book of these two brethren is due whatever of convenience in arrangement and attractiveness in appearance the volume presents.

Yours for knowing the Scriptures and a consecrated Christias life and service,

JAS. W. WELLONS.

Elon College, N. C.

Introduction

THE writer had the privilege of reading in the manuscript the contents of this volume, VITAL TRUTHS FOR HUNGRY HEARTS. The beloved author, who through a long life, like Enoch, has walked with God, writes not from a theological or technical point of view, but out of the abundance of his great heart and mature experience. Now in his ninetieth year, a keen observer of human nature and a man endowed with an uncommon amount of common sense, a preacher of the Word, a pastor, and an evangelist, he presents in these pages the rich fruitage of many summers and diligent search.

Mainly intended for young ministers, the contents will be found suggestive and helpful to every one in search of

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divine truth. The author expresses only his own views and thoughts as he has gleaned them from experience and the Word of God. He has woven into his thought as little of self and as much of divine truth as is consistent with individual responsibility and interpretation. The reader, to get the full force of the facts presented, will find it of advantage to look up and verify the scriptural references which are freely used.

Though the author is advanced in years and experience, his thought is clear and vigorous and his style is simple and genuine. His heart's desire is, as any one reading the volume will discover, that this message of good news which he gives his fellow pilgrims, may be a source of help to them, as their realization and experience were to him, in finding that city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God.

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The mature deliberations of a devout mind, the vital truths of a heart that has, from very early years, hungered after righteousness, the yearnings and expressions of a soul perfervid with the love of God and fellowman—these are they which the reader will find on the pages of this refreshing and delightful volume.

Respectfully,

J. O. ATKINSON.

Elon College, N. C., February 15, 1915.

By Way of Beginning

A WORD TO THE READER:

The title of this book is promising to a hungry heart, to the heart that is famishing for the Bread of Life and athirst for the waters of salvation. The well may be deep, but the bucket of faith can reach its depths and bring needed supplies.—*John 4:11.*

It was Jesus Himself who said :

“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.”—*Matt. 5:8.*

A hungry heart searches after God. We seek Him in prayer, in Bible study, in meditation, and in service. His table is always spread in reach of the hungry, and yet many starve in a spiritual way through neglect and indifference.

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parable, speaking to yourself. You may be a handsome lamp in the church of Christ, but you can never shine till your heart is touched by the divine flame and light is given you from above. You may take part in public worship, you may give your money, you may even lavish your time on church work, but if you have not the Holy Spirit in your life, nor the divine fire in your heart, at best, you are simply an ornamental lamp, empty and worthless in the sight of God. It was Jesus who laid upon His disciples the injunction:

“Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.”—*Matt. 5:16.*

A lamp without oil cannot shine. What oil is to the lamp, that the Holy Spirit is to the life of the Christian.

BY WAY OF BEGINNING

Good works do not constitute the light, but the light shows the good works, and therefore where the light is, there you may expect to find good works. When Paul was preaching in Macedonia there were many lights in the room.—*Acts 20:8.* Every Christian is a light in the circle in which he lives, that is, he is if he has received the illumination of the Spirit.—*Hebrews 10:32.* Under the blessings of God the Christian must shine in his own little corner, showing Christ to men. The Church that is well lighted by the consecrated lives of its members will be a great power in winning men for Jesus. That is the drawing power so much needed in all of our churches today.

To help men to such a life of service is the aim of this book. Bible teachings on the great fundamental doctrines of Christianity are emphasized in a simple

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manner that all may get help. How few men and women really study the great truths of salvation and the Christian life! This is the need of the Church today.

CHAPTER I

Man

MAN is said to be the noblest handiwork of God. This is true because God made man in His own image.—*Gen. 1:26*. That image was moral and spiritual, not physical. He was made of the dust of the earth, but transformed and made flesh and given life by the power of God.—*Gen. 2:7*. Man was made in a state of perfect innocence. In this state he met the tempter and fell into the ways of sin. He fell through believing the devil's lie.—*Genesis 3:4*. God had given a command (*Genesis 2:16, 17*). This believing the devil's lie separated man from God. Because of this separation God was grieved, and at

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once began the gracious work of bringing man back into loving obedience and harmony with Himself. Begin the study of this thought in *Genesis 3:15*, and follow it throughout the Bible. In such a study will be unfolded to you God's marvelous plan of salvation, so full of interest that even the angels have desired to look into it.—*1 Peter 1:12.*

CHAPTER II

Sin

SIN is a mystery. Why is it in the world? Why is it permitted to come into human life? There is a reason. We may not understand all about it, but there is one great outstanding fact which we can grasp, God helping us; viz.: Strange as it may seem, sin is a necessity in the moral sphere of human life, and for the reason that if there were no sin in the world to stand by the side of righteousness, there could be no choice as between righteousness and sin. We should be righteous because we could not help it—nothing else we could be, but when sin and righteousness were put before us, then we

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could choose for ourselves—that is moral responsibility. But fettered by sin man could not deliver himself from its curse. Then God undertook to make practical a plan of salvation that He might help the sinful one whose choice was for God and right.

What is sin? Sin is:

Imaginations of the unrenewed heart are—*Gen. 6:5, 8, 21.*

The thought of foolishness.—*Prov. 24:9.*

Omitting to do one's known duty.—*Jer. 4:17.*

It is the abominable thing which God hates.—*Jer. 44:4; Prov. 15:9.*

All sin comes from the heart.—*Matt. 15:12.*

It is the sting of death.—*1 Cor. 15:56.*

It is the fruit of lust.—*James 1:15.*

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The transgression of the law.—*1 John 3:4.*

It is instigated by the devil.—*1 John 3:8.*

All unrighteousness.—*1 John 5:17.*

CHAPTER III

The Word of God

WITH man lost in sin, it became necessary for God to send him a message of salvation. This He did through the Bible, which is the Word of God, and through His Son, Jesus Christ. This Word is of vital importance. It is the Bread of Life. A type of this Bread is given in Deut. 8:3, where we are told that we are not to live by Bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. This view is confirmed by Jesus in Matt. 4:4. Even Job seems to have known of the Word of God as bread. In Job 23:12, he declared: "I have esteemed the words of his mouth more

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than my necessary food.'’ Under the guise of modern scholarship men have tried to make it appear that the Bible after all was only the work of men, and therefore not only liable to error, but actually containing much that is error. This is only the expression of vain man. He seeks to make himself the chief source of authority among men. The claim is the outcome of his own sin and vanity.

Paul, one of the most learned men of his age, did not so understand it. Hear him:

“For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye have heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you which believe—*I Thess. 2:13.*

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Paul, the greatest of the Apostles, believed the Word which he preached to them was indeed the Word of God. Not only so, but he believed it was the sword of the Spirit, in the faithful use of which men and women were convicted and by the Spirit converted and saved. Hear Paul again on this matter:

“For the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”—*Heb. 4:12.*

It is evident then that the Word of God is a powerful instrument in the salvation of men, and as such it is to be in the hands of the minister of the gospel, and indeed in the hands of all Christian workers, who seek to become ser-

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vants of the Lord in bringing man back to God that he may enter into life, as God originally designed. It then is the most natural thing that the minister and servant of God should cling to the Word, that he should study it and seek to give it to others. The very life of God is in His Word, and therefore to be ignorant of the teachings of the Bible is to be ignorant of God and the life He gives to the believing soul.

The Word of God is spoken of as SEED—*Psa. 126:6*, as PURE—*Psa. 119:140*, as SACRED—*Deut. 4:2*; as UNFAILING—*1 Kings 8:56*; as LIGHT—*Psa. 119:105*; as JUST and RIGHT—*Deut. 32:4; Isa. 65:16; Rom. 3:4; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18*.

It seems clear that all this talk of the Bible as full of error is the merest cant, the expression of men who know not the God of the Bible, and who fear not to

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dishonor the truth. The Bible is the Word of God, and as such, it is the light on life's pathway. Let us hold to its truths as the only anchor given to us on the troubled sea of life.

CHAPTER IV

The Atonement

TO atone for a crime is what you can do for yourself. The payment of a debt may be made by another and the debt transferred, so another shall carry the burden rather than the man who was in debt. It is just so with the sinner. He was in debt to the law of God by reason of his sins. Another took his place and made a sacrifice of Himself to save the sinner. That is what is called in Theology the vicarious sacrifice—the Son of God taking the place and suffering instead of the guilty sinner. Human governments rarely ever enter into any such relations with men guilty of wrong doing, but that is just what

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Christ did for guilty sinners. “He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

Theologians have raised the question as to whether the atonement is *general* or *limited*. In respect to its application in the final salvation of men it is limited to as many as believe, but in no sense is it indefinite.

In both the Old and New Testaments the atonement is the basis of reconciliation to God on the part of the sinner. *Heb. 9:15; Romans 3:24-26; 5:1-21.* Hence we are taught in the Word that Christ by his own blood has obtained eternal redemption for us.—*Heb. 9:12.* Therefore, the word redemption is used as indicating pardon granted and actual deliverance from punishment for sin.

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Eph. 1:7; Gal. 1:14. Having been pardoned and adopted into the family of God, sanctification follows, and means “the deliverance of the believer from the dominion of sin”—*I Pet. 1:18; Isa. 59:20.* Atonement and redemption differ in their nature. One is the cause, the other is the effect.—*Isa. 53:4, 9, 10, 12.* One may pray for the work of redemption in his life, but there is no need to pray for the atonement, since Christ once made atonement for all who will believe. Who can estimate the merit of the precious blood of Christ?

Well did Paul declare that the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them that perish, but unto them that believe it is the power of God unto salvation.

Atheists deny that any proper atonement can be made by the death of

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Christ. It is admitted that this death may become a power in morals. Infidels regard circumstances as the sole cause of virtue, and the life and death of Christ as altogether unnecessary and an imposition on humanity. The rejection of the efficacy of the atonement has made no one triumphant and happy in death, but the acceptance of the atonement and the vicarious sacrifice of Christ has given peace and joy in the dying moments of thousands, through the centuries which have come and gone, since that great event. Human depravity must have a Savior, or be lost in sin.

CHAPTER V

The Preacher

"**F**OR if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward, but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me." —*1 Cor. 9:16, 17.*

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."

The most important work a man can do is to preach the gospel, but to do that successfully he must be sound in doctrine, faith and principle. His heart must be thoroughly regenerated by divine grace, his teaching must be according to truth, he must be moved willingly to this service under the con-

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straining power of the Holy Spirit. What he teaches must be supported by the Word of God, for truth is the basis of teaching and conduct. A corrupt heart is a disgrace to a minister and in fact to any Christian. To bear injuries with patience and Christian fortitude is Christ-like. To be courteous to all is characteristic of Christianity and it should always mark the Christian minister. A minister cannot succeed without knowledge and especially without a knowledge of God, supported by a definite Christian experience. The minister's mind should always be well stored with Bible truth. Salvation by Jesus Christ should be well understood in all of its bearings.

A knowledge of history, natural philosophy, logic, mathematics and rhetoric must be duly acquired by the man who

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is to present the Gospel acceptably. He should be able to read the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New in Greek. The minister must be a student, not idle, nor indifferent, but active, always on the alert, seeking the good of his Master's cause. He must be a great reader of the Word and of other good books.

The minister must cultivate a love for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, being ever zealous of good works. He must be punctual in his life work, and never unmindful of his promises. He should study how to become a good pastor, to visit and to care for those who may be in distress. He should see that the ordinances are duly administered.

The minister must study consistency in his own life, remembering he is look-

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ed upon by the people as a sample of Christian character. He should devote much time to prayer—his is to be a life of constant devotion to the work of his Master among men. The children must be well cared for and taught the truth as the surest guarantee for bringing them to Christ. They must learn—they will learn good or bad things, and therefore the pastor's first duty is to see that they are taught the truth as it is in Christ.

The Apostles studied for three years under Christ—the greatest teacher the world has ever known. Surely the young man should prepare well for his great work. Paul went down to Arabia for a protracted study—we hear nothing of his preaching while he remained there. Even Christ's early life must

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have been given to study for He increased in wisdom and knowledge.

True education does not make one proud, but humble. Where can you find a more learned man than Jonathan Edwards, or a more sincere Christian than Wesley? Where can you find a more devout man than Martin Luther, or a more consistent Christian than Calvin?

Eecl. 1:1-3; 12:9-10; Luke 3:3; 8:1; 9:6; Acts 8:4-12; 10:36; 11:19; 19:13; 20:28; Romans 2:21; 16:25; I Cor. 1:18-21; 2:4; 15:14; II Cor. 10:14; 11:4; Gala. 1:23; Titus 1:3.

CHAPTER VI

Preach the Word

THE man who is in real communion with God has been convicted of his sin, converted, regenerated and put to active service.

We can teach successfully only what we know. The preacher is a teacher of truth and righteousness. Enoch prophesied and preached. He walked with God and learned His way and will for himself. Then he was qualified to teach sinners the way of life. The way was exemplified in his teaching and in his communion with God. How wonderful is such fellowship! It is in maintaining such relationship with Him that

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the minister and other Christians, too, come to their best.

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death. From Enoch to Moses they had worshipped in private families and public places.—*II Peter 2:5; Genesis 18:19; John 1:17*. Solomon and Amos were both preachers. Amos was also a herdsman. *Judges 28:8; Ex. 4:31; Psa. 68:11; 1 Kings 2; Amos 7:14-17*. Elijah and Elisha were preachers and had stated places for worship. Moses and Noah were preachers.

The Jews were in Babylon for 70 years. They taught of one God. Hezekiah preached and prophesied. John the Baptist preached in the wilderness, as the forerunner of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ himself preached. No doubt they preached extemporaneous sermons,

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but some of these sermons were reported and so given to the world for the edification of the ministry and the Church. They preached as the Holy Spirit moved them—they did not regulate the time of their preaching by a clock, nor yet by what some sleepy-headed man had to say of “a long sermon.”

The ancient preacher was appointed to preach. He was not expected to preach and do everything else under the sun. He was to preach and he was regarded as worthy of his hire. But who is the preacher? St. Paul tells us in 1 Cor. 9:16-17. It will do you good to read what he says of the fearful responsibility of preaching.

A preacher’s great work is to preach the gospel. Preaching the truth of God’s Word is his business, and yet if

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circumstances should make it necessary, he must do other things to earn his bread. Paul made tents and was honored in doing it. Even when in secular work we must not forget that we are still preachers of the everlasting Gospel of the Son of God.

Let the Bible be the book of knowledge above all other books.

Preach publicly, preach privately, preach on the highways, in the home—everywhere an opportunity is given. Always be ready to preach, and never apologize for not being ready. You can't feed the flock unless you have food. A man cannot work without food. You can't preach if you are an ignoramus—you must know your Bible, and to know your Bible you must have ability to study—your mind must be trained.

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Christ said to Peter: "Feed my lambs"—"feed my sheep." The people often suffer for the want of the pure gospel and the preacher is to blame. We must have divine grace, or we cannot preach acceptably.

Our commission is to preach the word—preach on the mountain top and down in the valley—preach to the old and the young, to the rich and poor, to the white and the black—preach the word. Tell them of the joys of heaven and of the horrors of the lost.

"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of; for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."

"For if I do this thing willingly, I have a reward; but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me.—*I Cor. 9:16-17.*

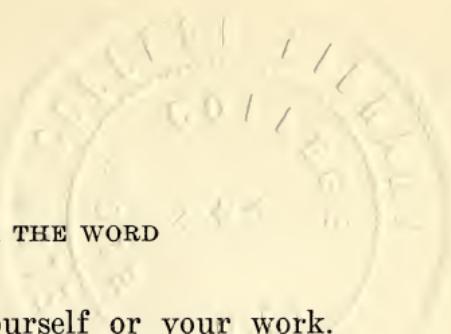
PREACH THE WORD

The most important work a man can do is to preach the gospel, but to preach the gospel truly, he must have a good working knowledge of the Bible and be sound in faith and principle. His heart must be thoroughly regenerated by divine grace, for then only can he preach the gospel in real power from above—then only may he become a channel of divine truth. He must be moved by the Holy Spirit—preaching the gospel must be a matter of necessity and principle. “Woe is me if I preach not the gospel.” The minister must *possess* what he *professes*—he must *practice* what he preaches, according to the Word of God. The importance of truth in teaching cannot be over-estimated. To attempt to teach without truth is the same as firing a gun without shot, and that kind of gun never hits

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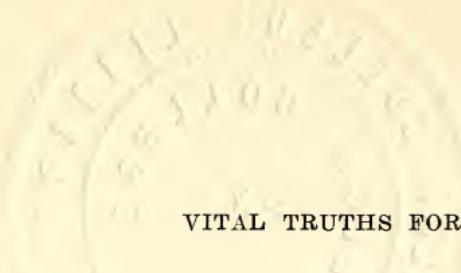
the mark. The preacher should be mild in his manner, upright in life and conduct, and firm and faithful in standing for the truth. A corrupt life is a disgrace to a minister. To bear injuries with patience and Christian fortitude is one seal to the life and work of the preacher of righteousness. Be kind and courteous to all, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, great and small, bad and good.

The minister must be a student—he cannot preach the gospel if he be not studious—ignorance in the ministry is not a power for good, but a dreadful handicap, opening the way for much evil. Without knowledge the minister must be a failure, and failure in the ministry is a disgrace to the Church. Study to show yourself a workman approved of God—having no occasion to



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be ashamed of yourself or your work. The minister must keep his mind stored with knowledge and Bible truth. A knowledge of the plan of salvation through Jesus Christ should be well understood in all of its bearings upon human life. A knowledge of history, natural philosophy, logic, mathematics, rhetoric, etc., is important—do not shirk these studies. Ordinary studies will do perhaps for the average man and woman, but not so with the minister of Jesus Christ. He cannot do his work to full advantage unless he can read the Old Testament in Hebrew and the New in Greek. True it is that many ministers have gotten along and have done even a good work without the advantage of a knowledge of these languages, but how much more they might have accomplished in the Master's vine-



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yard had they been familiar with them! Many valuable ideas can be gotten from the Bible only through a knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek. Not to be able to command the benefit of these languages is a sad lack in the life of any minister. Even such knowledge is not enough. The minister needs to be a man of wide reading in good literature —he must keep himself posted in the current thought of the day.

Some ministers have seemed to believe that they were made to live in a little kingdom, all their own. Selfishness in any form is a handicap to the minister. He should be benevolent toward all men. Especially should he love all who love our Lord Jesus Christ. Not only so, but he should seek to win all men to Christ.

The minister must not only be zealous

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in gospel work, but he should be especially careful to keep his promises and be punctual in meeting his engagements. Ten minutes late may seem a small matter, but it is in fact a most serious matter to a minister, when it impresses the community unfavorably as to his reliability.

Some ministers have looked upon pastoral work as irksome, and they have shunned it, but always to the injury of their influence among the people. To be of special help to the people the minister must know them personally, and he cannot know them and their needs, except he visit them in their homes, look after the sick and the needy, the discouraged and the unfortunate. A minister of ordinary powers can never be a success without the help of faithful pastoral work.

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Again, the preacher needs to be careful of both his conduct and his work. If he neglect the poor, the needy, or the sick, or the ordinances of God's house, then he is a loser in his life work. The pastor needs especially to be careful as to his personal habits, such as cleanliness, neatness, punctuality, truthfulness, even in small matters, guarded as to his language both *in* and *out* of the pulpit. His must be a prayerful life, devoted to the highest and best ends of men. He should never forget his congregation, especially as to the spiritual welfare of all.

The minister must give much attention to the children in his charge. He must see that they are properly taught. Children will learn something. If they are not taught good lessons, they will learn bad ones. To neglect the children

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is to cut short one's own usefulness in the ministry.

If any are disposed to enter the ministry without careful preparation, because, as they say, Jesus himself, when on earth, chose ignorant men, I need only remind all such that the disciples Jesus chose and sent out, spent three years under the *personal teaching* of Jesus Christ, who was the greatest and best teacher the world has ever known. Surely the ignorance of the disciples is no reason for ministers to excuse themselves from due preparation for their work. Again, even Paul, though a man of great learning, went down into Arabia in preparation for his great work. Even Jesus spent his early life in acquiring knowledge—He learned under the doctors and others.

Education is not designed to puff up,

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but rather to show us ourselves in the light of truth, till in humility we shall know how to do our work as becomes a true servant of God. Education, true education, does not puff up, but it leads to the way of humility and larger, real, service in the Kingdom of God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

The centuries are but a pathway for such men. There is no true greatness without humility. Jonathan Edwards was a great and a learned man, but he was an humble one. Martin Luther was a great man, but humble and learned. John Calvin was a great theologian, but he was also an humble Christian. John Knox was a great preacher, but he was a man of prayer. Mary Queen of Scots said she feared the prayers of John Knox more than she did the ravages of an invading army.

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Scriptural References.—Eccl. 1:1-3; 12:9-10; Rom. 10:14; 1 Tim. 2:7; 2 Tim. 1:2; 2 Pet. 2:5; James 3:2; Matt. 3:1; Luke 3:3; 11:32; 8:1; 9:6; Acts 8:4-12; 10:36; 11:19; 19:13; 20:19-28; 28:31; Romans 2:21; 16:25.

CHAPTER VII

Faith

"**F**AITH is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."—*Heb. 1:11.*

Faith is confidence in God's promises which are either expressed or implied. The Lord said to the nobleman: "Go thy way, thy son liveth." The man believed and his son lived.—*John 4:50.* Jesus said to the blind man, "Go wash in the pool of Siloam," and having obeyed, he came seeing. —*John 9:7.* When one asks for instruction and having received it, acts on it, that is faith —it credits testimony. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life. If one refuses to believe, he shall not

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see life and the wrath of God is upon such an one. To know the only true God is life eternal.—*John 17:3*. Knowledge is founded on testimony, true faith rests on things promised, but not seen. Hence believers are said to walk by faith—not by sight.

The Israelites believed they would have a safe passage through the Red Sea, and faith gave it to them.—*Exod. 14:13*. As thy faith so be it unto thee. Without faith it is impossible to please God, or gain a victory. Faith in Jesus Christ is the soul's assurance of His power to save.—*Acts 2:30-34*.

Noah was moved to build the ark by faith; Lot warned his sons-in-law by faith; Nineveh was saved by believing the truth as preached by Jonah. Belief saves; unbelief destroys. Moses gave warning of the dangers of the

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coming hail storm; they who believed were saved; they who believed not were destroyed.—*Exod. 9:20, 21.* Faith gave Gideon victory, the Midianites fleeing as he and his army advanced—*Judges 6:7.* Forty years were the Israelites kept out of the promised land through unbelief. Eternal life is the gift of faith through Jesus Christ.—*John 3:14, 15.* Whatever faith asks of the Father in the name of His Son will be given. We are justified through faith in Christ. Faith without works is dead. We live and love and work by faith in God.

CHAPTER VIII

Conviction

WHEN a man is awakened to a consciousness of the guilt of sin he is said to be under conviction. The word conviction is very significant in its makeup. It comes from two Latin words, *con*, with, and *vinculum*, a chain. Then it means that the Holy Spirit binds one's sins to himself as with the chain of truth, and being unable to free himself from the awful pressure of a sense of sin in his life, he is made miserable, till in order to free himself, he becomes willing to part company with sin. This willingness to part with sin is called repentance.

A sense of the guilt of sin brings the

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most dreadful suffering. Sin is the most fearful incubus that ever rested on a human heart—it gives such a sense of the wrath of God abiding on the sinner. Nothing but the Spirit can show us the hatefulness of sin and its awful consequences to the life. This is in part the bitterness of sin. God deals with the conscience of the sinner to bring him to repentance and to life in Christ. It is through the preaching of the gospel that man is brought to see himself in sin.—*John 16:8-11.*

Conviction of sin is one, but it manifests itself in different ways, according to the temperament of the individual. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Great sinners often seem to have no consciousness of sin till conviction is wrought upon the mind and heart. In

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many instances, in Bible times, and since, men have been terribly shaken by this power of conviction. This work of grace must be deep and pure, or it will wane and disappear. Without conviction there can be no repentance, and if no repentance, then no forgiveness, and if no forgiveness, then no life in Christ. Hence conviction is as essential to salvation as repentance and faith.

Sin is a transgression of the law of God. The justice of God therefore requires its punishment—some one must pay the penalty of sin. Who but the sinner? Jesus voluntarily took the sinner's place and paid the debt. His payment is effective only through faith on the sinner's part. What an opportunity!

CHAPTER IX

Repentance

REPENTANCE is essential to salvation, for if there be no repentance there can be, so far as we know, no forgiveness.

Repentance is two-fold in its nature—it is godly sorrow for, and a sincere turning away from, sin. There must be sorrow *for* sin before there can be a sincere turning away *from* it.

However, we need more to know what God says of repentance than man's opinions of it. Man's opinions may be, and often are, wrong, but what God says is correct.

I. What is Repentance?

Let us have the Bible answer.

REPENTENCE

“Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.”—*Isaiah 45:22.*

Repentance is therefore a turning away from sin and a turning unto God. This is positively commanded, so that no man has a right to refuse such action on his own part.

II. The Necessity of Repentance.

Jesus Himself declares the necessity, the absolute necessity, for repentance, when He says:

“Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.”—*Luke 13:5.* This necessity He emphasized by repeating the fact over and over. God sent a message to Israel, long before Christ came in the flesh, saying:

“Repent and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.—*Ezek. 18:30.*

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That shows the fruit of sin—ruin.
Hence the absolute necessity to turn
away from it.

III. The Divine Side of Repentance
Repentance of sin is God's gift.—
Acts 11:18.

Jesus also commanded men to repent.
—*Revelation 2:5.*

To this end He came into the world,
to call the people to repentance.—*Matt.*
9:13.

Repentance is made effectual by the
Holy Spirit.—*Zech. 12:10.*

It is called repentance unto life.—
Acts 11:18.

It is also called repentance unto sal-
vation.—*2 Cor. 7:10.*

Conviction of sin is necessary to re-
pentance.—*Acts 2:37.*

CHAPTER X

Conversion

CONVERSION is man's response to God's call to life. It is a turning from sin and Satan unto God through Christ.—*Acts 26:18*. Conversion is influenced by the power of divine grace.—*Luke 22:32*. It is a turning from darkness to light—from sin to righteousness through Christ. (See *Ezek. 36:37*.) Man is dead in sin—the stone of condemnation has been laid upon his grave, but regeneration rolls the stone away and commands the dead to come forth into life. With the pulsations of divine life in the heart, man begins to love God and His people.—*John 13:25*. The new man delights to confide in God's prom-

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ises.—*Psa. 9:10; Job 42:5.* By their walk we know them.—*Matt. 7:20.* Every time a man becomes convinced that he is wrong and changes his course, he is converted anew from the error of his way.

CHAPTER XI

Regeneration, or the Spiritual Birth

REGENERATION is a Scriptural term for the new birth in Christ. It is the name given by Jesus Himself to the great change which is worked in the human heart by the Spirit. It is an act of God in which we experience a change of heart and life.—*Titus 3:5*. In this new life old things pass away and all things (spiritual) become new. The church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Disciples of Christ have seemed to mix the ideas of regeneration and baptism, holding that regeneration is given in baptism, or that sin is washed away in the act of re-

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ceiving baptism. The Bible teaches us that we are born of the Spirit and cleansed by the blood of Christ. It is expressly stated in both Old and New Testaments that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. That does not savor of baptismal regeneration in any form.

Both regeneration and baptism have a place in the plan of salvation—regeneration is an inward work of the Spirit, while baptism is an outward profession of this new life. This change is not primarily of the body, but of the inner life, conforming the whole man to the moral and spiritual image of Christ—a work which water cannot accomplish.

The theme of the moral law is love to God and love to man. We are to love God with all the heart, soul and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves, walking

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not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Thus we are born again.—*John 3:5-7; Eph. 2:1.* We are not born of man, but of God.—*John 1:12, 13.* We are born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, through the precious blood of Christ. The preaching of the gospel is a means through which the new birth is brought to men.—*1 Cor. 4:15.*

The evidence of such a change of heart comes to us first in our conviction of sin which works godly sorrow to repentance, and out of these come faith in, and love for, God. This marvelous change in man is worked instantaneously by the Spirit of God.—*John 3:7, 8.* There can be no middle ground between life and death. We are alive in Christ, or we are dead in sin. Regeneration is not sanctification. Regeneration is the

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instantaneous work of the Spirit, while sanctification is His progressive work in the life of the believer, and therefore the Christian's life is progressive.

This change of heart, of the whole man, is assured in regeneration.—*2 Cor. 5:17.*

It is a heart work.—*Ezek. 36:36, 37.*

Its effects are visible in the life.—*Acts 13:14-18.*

The experience of the new life is delightful.—*1 Peter 1:8, 9.*

Love rules the life and drives enmity away.—*John 3:14-17; Titus 3:1-6.*

Love is the primary evidence of the new birth.—*John 3:14.*

As a man is born but once in the flesh, so he is born but once in the spiritual life. He may go astray in an unguarded moment, but he will return to the

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ways of truth and righteousness, or he will be lost eternally.

CHAPTER XII

The Love of God

THE Love of God is the foundation of all true love, just as the light of the sun is the source of all true light. Obedience is the fruit of faith. The virtue of faith is seen in its fruits. God gives to man life and immortality. We are His by virtue of creation and purchase, and obedience to His law and conformity to His will are obligations of the most binding and lasting sort. Supreme love to God as the source of all truth is demanded of man by every rational consideration. The recognition of this fact is clearly and definitely imposed in the face of the fall of man, and for the reason that what we lost in

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Adam has been restored to us in Christ. This restoration cost God the gift of His only begotten Son. This was and still is God's greatest manifestation of love, the expression of the riches of grace as given to the world in Jesus Christ.

The love of God is wrought in the human heart and life by the Holy Spirit. No man can be filled with God's love, if he grieve away the Holy Spirit. No man can produce divine love in his own, or in another's heart. Love is God's great gift to man, hence true Christian love must come as the work of the Spirit—He sheds abroad the love of God in the heart, and that makes the Christian life. In other words, the life of faith is the fruit of the Spirit, just as the life of all vegetable matter is the fruit of the light and heat of the sun.

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The heart is the great channel of grace. Hence God requires man to believe and love Him with all the heart and mind and strength, not so much because God needs such an arrangement, but because man in sin is lost without such a force to sustain him. The heart is like a vacuum, the first opportunity it will be filled with something, with the good or the bad, and as a given space cannot be filled with two separate substances at the same time, God requires our hearts to be filled with His love as the surest means of crowding out all love for any evil thing—that much done and man is safe.—*Matt. 22:36-38.*

Love is the essential character of God.
—*1 John 4:8.*

Love is the essence of His Sovereignty.—*Deut. 10:15.*

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God's love is the acme of all greatness.—*Eph. 2:4.*

God rests in His love.—*Zeph. 3:17.*

God's love will not allow Him to forget His loved ones.—*Isa. 49:15, 16.*

His love cannot be alienated—broken.
—*Rom. 8:39.*

His love is a constraining influence in the believer's life.—*Hos. 11:4.*

His love is everlasting.—*Jer. 31:3.*

His love is centered upon Christ.—*John 15:9.*

His love is the believer's through Jesus.—*John 17:26.*

In that love Jesus abides, and we with Him.—*John 15:10.*

Abiding in that love we shall wear the image of Jesus.—*Rom. 8:29.*

CHAPTER XIII

Love as a Grace

LOVE is the greatest of all graces. Indeed, it has been said to be the greatest thing in the world. If we study the question in the light of John 3:16, which declares God's great love for the world, we may consider it the greatest thing in the world. According to 1 John 4:19, *We love Him because He first loved us.* With God love is not a passion as it is with us, but love is His very nature. He is the essence of love. Paul rightly estimated this fact when he said: "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto

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salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

God gave His Son to die that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of God's works. In the revelation of His will and the declaration of His love toward us, He planned that we might become partakers of the divine nature.—*1 Pet. 1:4.*

Again in Exodus 19:4, God makes it plain that He not only saves, but He gives us support as we go forth to do His will and to manifest His love to men. He likens this support to one borne on eagles' wings. Truly His love is everlasting and cannot be broken. In His actual dealing with His people, He both blesses and sustains them in trial and under burden, going with them through the valley and shadow of death,

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and bringing them unto glory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Truly His love is everlasting.—*Rom. 8:35-39.*

From this love the true believer is inseparable.—*Eph. 2:4; 3:19.*

God's love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit is the source of the believer's power. It is this love that holds the Church compact together as one body and makes her the most powerful organization, morally and spiritually, on earth.

CHAPTER XIV

Christ's Baptism

JOHN the Baptist baptized the people as they confessed their sins. He said he baptized them unto (because of) repentance, but at the same time he announced that Another was coming after him—that He would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire. In keeping with this thought are the words of the Master Himself: “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”—*John 3:5.* The mere letter of water baptism is worthless. It must at least be followed by the work of the Spirit.

John came and preached the coming of Jesus. He was a voice in the wilder-

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ness, calling the people to repentance. Jesus followed, preaching the giving of life—spiritual, everlasting life. John's baptism seemed to be the closing note of the Old Dispensation, while the baptism of the Spirit and fire seemed to be the opening note of the New Dispensation. Isaiah saw this day and indicated its approach when he said:

"For the Lord shall comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste places; and He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody."

John's preaching was to prepare the people for this day of good things from the hand of the Lord. He proclaimed his message in the wilderness of Judea. John was baptizing in Jordan. Here

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he baptized Jesus. Jordan was a narrow stream, rising in the mountains of Northern Palestine. It passed down the Jordan valley and emptied into the Dead Sea. John was baptizing on the east bank of the Jordan when Jesus came to him to be baptized, declaring that He did it as an act of righteousness. The next day, seeing Jesus coming to him, John said: "Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." Jesus was then about thirty years old—the time when the Levite entered upon his work as a priest.—*Num. 4:3.* Immediately following the baptism of Jesus came the temptation in the wilderness, when Jesus met the devil and conquered him. The tempter came to Jesus when He was at His weakest point, just after he had fasted forty days and forty nights. This gives as-

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surance to the people of God of victory over the tempter through Jesus Christ, for if Jesus was conqueror over Satan in the moment of His greatest weakness, there can be no doubt of victory at all other times. It was after this that John unselfishly declared, "He must increase, but I must decrease." After this they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and even John's disciples were baptized again. See Acts 19:1-5. Philip also baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. On the day of Pentecost three thousand people were baptized in the same name. Henceforth John, as he had said, decreased, but Jesus grew in power with the people. In Matt. 28:19, the disciples were commissioned to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. This is Christian baptism, and it is so practiced to-

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day. Like John, the disciples today decrease as they serve, but their labors add to the magnifying of the name of the Lord Jesus among men and to the building up of His kingdom on earth.

CHAPTER XV

Water Baptism

WE are baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. He is not divided—we have one Christ, one baptism. As to the subject and mode of baptism, there may be differences of opinion, but the design is one—its aim is to influence the religious unity of the world in the one faith.

In Ephesians 4:5, we read of One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. He is the eternal God. These connections cannot be broken without destroying the Church in its unity. Jesus died for the heathen as well as for the civilized man.

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One code of instruction was left for all. The men who know Jesus were placed under obligation to take His message of salvation to such as know it not. The commission was not to a few, not even to the good, but to all the world. Jesus died and arose again that He might gather to Himself one Universal Church —for all the world. Again it is clear that those who have received Him must carry the news to such as are yet in the darkness of sin. The one baptism seems to have been designed as a common bond in the unity of the Church, but alas, men have made it a common dispute, tearing asunder the parts of the body of the Church which He purchased with His own blood.

CHAPTER XVI

The Mode of Baptism

THE Protestant Church has long been divided respecting the mode of Christian baptism, one part affirming and the other denying, that a total immersion in water is essential to the proper administration of the ordinance. The question is not, whether immersion is baptism or not—we all admit it is—we are all willing that all so desiring it shall be baptized by immersion. As an answer to a good conscience.—*1 Pet. 3:21.* The right of choice as to mode has always been practiced in the Christian Church, and baptism by effusion has always been practiced with us in the Southern branch of the Church. But

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the question is whether immersion is essential to the ordinance. Our Baptist brethren contend with one voice that it is. We do not agree in that opinion. Sometimes health or locality would prevent, and our Lord's religion is not impractical, and ill fitted. Water baptism is an emblem of spiritual baptism, representing the divine Spirit on the heart by pouring or sprinkling. "I will pour out my spirit upon you, I will sprinkle clean water on you, and ye shall be clean."—*Lev. 14:7*. The baptism of the Holy Ghost of which water baptism is the symbol or sign is a seal of God's love. The Greek word for baptism does not always mean immersion, no English scholar would say immerse *with* water. The most learned men differ as to the mode. John the Baptist baptized *with* water. Again it

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is said: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean."—*Ezek. 36:25*. Paul said, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel."—*1 Cor. 1:17*. Yet he did baptize, but it was a matter of secondary importance. We are taught to be baptized in Jesus' name. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned.—*Mark 16:16*. The congregation of Israel were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.—*1 Cor. 10:2; Exod. 14:22*. On the day of Pentecost it does not seem very reasonable after much of the day had been spent that they baptized by immersion three thousand during the remainder of the day. In acts 8:12 men and women were baptized. Now there may be considerable doubt about immersion, as Peter baptized Cornelius

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and his household.—*Acts 10:47.* We would not think Lydia and her household were immersed.—*Acts 16:15.* Neither would we think that the jailer and his family were baptized by immersion at this late hour of the night.—*Acts 16:33.* And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house and was baptized. I baptized the household of Stephanus.—*1 Cor. 1:16.* Baptism for the dead was not by immersion.—*1 Cor. 15:29.* It is admitted that sprinkling in a case of emergency is valid. I do not believe that exclusive immersion was practiced in former years. Christian baptism was administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.—*Matt. 28:19.*

CHAPTER XVII

Proper Candidates or Christian Baptism

HERE we meet a strong difference of opinion. The Baptists hold that believers only may be baptized and that the ordinance should be administered only by immersion. They deny that children of believing parents may be baptized, but Pedobaptists hold that such children are entitled to baptism.

We naturally feel a special interest in our children. In all the covenants God has made with man, the children have been included with their parents. Does anyone think that God has severed His covenant relations with man? Pedobaptists claim that baptism takes the

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place of circumcision. Baptists deny that it does. The covenant with Abraham was never abrogated. It is spoken of in the Old Testament as everlasting, and in the New, as lasting forever.—*Luke 1:55.* If baptism takes the place of circumcision, it would seem to be right to baptize children, as we know that in the early Church the children from their infancy were taught the Scriptures and made conversant with the teachings of God's Word. There can be nothing wrong in baptizing a child, if the child is allowed, when it comes to maturity, to choose some other form of baptism, if it so wishes.

The promises are to believers and to their children.—*Acts 2:39.*

Lydia and her household believed and were baptized.—*Acts 16:14.*

They brought little children and He

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put His hand on them and blessed them.

He said, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus also said: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to all nations," and He gave them this promise: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and he that believeth not shall be damned."

The candidate must have faith, as Jesus taught, or he could not properly be baptized.—*Matt. 2:5-12; Luke 3:3; Acts 19:4.*

As the disciples went forth preaching the gospel, thousands were converted and they were gladly baptized.—*Acts 2:41.*

The chief ruler believed and was baptized.

Paul baptized the household of Stephanas.

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Philip baptized the Eunuch.

Paul himself was baptized after he received his sight.—*Acts 9:18.*

The jailer and his household were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

It is clear that Jesus commanded the people to be baptized. It is also clear that the Apostles obeyed that command and baptized their converts.

It is safe to follow their example.

Let us have less controversy over the ordinances and more of grace and active service.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Baptism of the Holy Ghost

THE outpouring of the Holy Spirit was promised through the prophet Joel about 800 years before the Day of Pentecost. The same gift was also promised by Isaiah.—*Isaiah 32:15*. Jesus told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until endued with power from on high. The disciples obeyed that command. They tarried in “the upper room,” as many believe, for ten days, and—Pentecost came. It was the greatest manifestation of the Spirit that had ever been witnessed so far. It is true that the Spirit had been poured out on many individuals in the past, but not

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on the people of God as a collective body. Many consider Pentecost as the birthday of the Church.

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all taught the baptism of the Holy Ghost as essential to the divine life of the Church. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the overshadowing presence of God. It is a testimony of His loving favor. The Holy Spirit has two great purposes to accomplish among men, viz.: The giving and sustaining of life—spiritual life—and the enlightenment of believers through the illumination of the Word of God by the Spirit. The work of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the individual is essential to the life and fruitfulness of both.

As to the nature of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, it is perhaps sufficient to say: It is the outflow of God into

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human hearts, giving life (John 3:7), enlightening, (John 16:13), revealing (1 Cor. 2:10), purifying (Acts 15:8, 9), purifying the soul in holiness (2 Thess. 2:13), illuminating (Heb. 10:32), we are washed (1 Cor. 6:11), regenerating (Titus 3:5), giving power (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit overshadows the people of God and sustains them under trial and in service.

CHAPTER XIX

The Baptism of Fire

FIRE has always been known as a purifying element. Jeremiah (23: 29), says: "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" Again in Acts 2:3, we read: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them."

According to John, Jesus, as his successor, was to baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire. This baptism of fire evidently points to the work of purification of the human heart and life for the service of God among men. Ordinarily fire is supposed to burn and con-

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sume. The baptism of fire burns, but does not consume anything except sin. God gave an illustration of this work in the burning bush when He was teaching Moses great lessons. The dross of sin may be burned out, but the pure gold of character that has been cleansed by the blood of Jesus will remain an everlasting testimony to God's power to save and make pure and happy.

Just as the fire in the crucible separates the pure gold from the dross, so, in the life of the believer, the divine fire will separate sin from righteousness. It will put away the dross and preserve the pure gold. As long as the soul is fed with divine truth, the light of God will permeate that life.

We are taught that fire will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire, but the wheat He will gather into His

THE BAPTISM OF FIRE

garner. An apt figure of the lost sinner and the saved man.

The baptism of fire is symbolic of the power of the Spirit under the blood of Jesus to purify the life as a preparation for everlasting happiness.

CHAPTER XX

Baptism for the Dead

HERE we strike an interesting, but mysterious subject. In 1 Cor-15:29, we read :

“Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?”

This has long been a theological battle ground. Learned men have not been able to agree as to the meaning of the text. Most men who have undertaken to explain it have given it up, admitting they do not understand it. Of one thing we are sure, viz: The subject of discussion is the resurrection of the dead. Some have thought perhaps

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that it means if there be no resurrection, then why express a belief in it through baptism?

We are told that an old custom existed of baptizing another for one who had died without baptism. Some believe this verse has reference to this old custom, but it seems unbelievable that Paul would have permitted such an error to pass without a rebuke. However, we know he said not a word against the teachings of that strange verse. One of our own ministers holds that what was meant is that it has reference to such as were baptized upon their faith in the dead Christ, so that what Paul meant to say was: "Else what shall they do who were baptized upon their faith in the dead Christ, if the dead do not rise at all? The word dead in that verse in the Greek is plural, which

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would seem to indicate that there were others dead beside Christ, and that was true, for we are told when Christ was crucified that the graves opened and the bodies of them that slept came forth. Now as a faith in the resurrection of the dead Christ must include a faith in all others who had been raised from the dead, the plural in the word *dead* seems to be consistent with the interpretation our brother gives it. He may be right. Beyond all question Paul was discussing the resurrection of the dead. This interpretation is at least in harmony with that thought and it is at least worth studying.

CHAPTER XXI

The Unity of the Church

ONE of the strangest things in human history is the divided state of the Church—the blood-bought Church of Christ. It is inconceivable that Christ instituted more than one Church. He said himself: “If a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.” When He instituted His Church He said the gates of hell should not prevail against it. To have instituted two or a hundred Churches, and set them in array one against the other, would have been to invite defeat to His own work.

It is therefore clear that the unity of the Church was a necessity, if its high-

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est usefulness was to be attained. Jesus even prayed for the *oneness* of His Church.—*John 17*. In going through the New Testament the Unity of the Church fairly rings with its urgency, and yet we poor mortals have divided and distracted the Church till its highest usefulness has never been reached, and as a result two-thirds of the human family have never heard of Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers to men. Give us the true spiritual unity of the Church and the world will be speedily evangelized. Let the Church continue in a divided, and therefore in a distracted condition, and its conquest of the world must ever be very slow.

Paul saw the absolute necessity for the unity of the body of Christ—the Church. Hear his pleas with the people.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

To Rome he declared:

“So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

To the Corinthians he said:

“For we being many are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.”

Think of it! One body, eating (living on) one bread, and yet rent by strife and division.

Again addressing the Corinthians, he said:

“For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” That is true by every process of reasoning.

To the Church at Galatia Paul yet further emphasized the fact that there

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is no place for division in the Church, when he said :

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”

If the Church will accept Jesus’ idea of its unity, she must wonderfully re-adjust herself and get together.

A man was burying a faithful horse. The animal’s mate was standing by, looking on the proceedings. The owner said to his servant :

“I believe Dick (the living animal) loved Billy, (the dead horse).”

The servant answered

“Of course he did, Massa: they had *pulled together* for twenty years.”

Pulling together is the proof of unity. The complete Body is made of Christ and His Church. It is therefore out

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of the question to think of Christ separated from His Body. All true Christians must be members of the Church, united by the bonds of love and faith in the Living Head. All members of the physical body are controlled and directed by the head of the body—the heart and brain. It is even more true that all members of the Body of Christ are led by the one Spirit. Hence in the true Body of Christ we are all one in spirit and service and faith. Contentions and dissensions and strife are offensive to Christ and therefore a curse to the true Church—that is the Universal Church, into which all are called by the same Word and directed by the same Spirit.

CHAPTER XXII

The Lord's Supper

THE Lord's Supper seems to be the outgrowth of the ancient Passover. Jesus had just eaten the Passover with His disciples. He was soon to be delivered up to His enemies, but before that awful moment should come He instituted the Lord's Supper. The Passover had both an historical and a typical significance. As history it was designed to keep alive among the Israelites a true memory of their deliverance from death when the destroying angel passed over Egypt. As a type, it pointed to the sacrifice of Christ and the saving power of His death.

The law of the Passover was simple

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and plain. Every house was to provide a lamb. On the fourteenth day of Nisan the lamb was slain and the blood put on the doorposts and the upper doorposts of the houses. The flesh was roasted with fire and eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They ate with their loins girded and their shoes on and the staff in hand, and they ate in haste, all indicating their readiness to depart. The blood was a token of safety, whenever found on the door posts. The Passover thus became a memorial of their deliverance from the bondage of Egypt, and it was kept as a feast to the Lord throughout their generations.

According to Matthew's account, at the close of the Passover supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed it and brake it and gave to the disciples, saying:

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“Take, eat, this is my body.” Then He took the cup and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: “Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” They then sang a hymn and went out into the Mount of Olives. So this Supper became the believers’ memorial of the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. The Lord’s Supper is therefore to the Christian dispensation an institution similar to the Passover under the Mosaic dispensation. The former succeeded the latter.

To this day the disciples of Christ keep the Lord’s Supper in memory of Him as the one great offering for the sins of the world. Jesus himself said: “This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.”

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See 1 Cor. 11:23. It seems therefore to be the privilege and duty of all believers to partake of the supper whenever a suitable opportunity is given. As to how often this shall be done there seems to be no specific direction. Jesus simply said : "As oft as ye do this, ye do show forth the Lord's death till he come." That is a marvelous purpose, and whether we understand it or not, we ought to be ever ready to do our part to celebrate this most wonderful event in the history of redemption.

Paul taught us that the believer must not partake of these emblems unworthily. See 1 Cor. 11:29. Many have declined to partake of the Supper at all because of what Paul said of not taking it unworthily, for fear of eating and drinking damnation to oneself. Many have read that passage thus: "Where-

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fore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup unworthy, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.” Paul did not use the word *unworthy*, but *unworthily*, showing that the unworthiness of the matter was in the act and not in the person. The Corinthians were using the Lord’s Supper to take the place of their own evening meal. This Paul condemned as unworthily done, and that became condemnation to the person so eating. He told them that they should eat, if hungry, at home. See 1 Cor. 11:34.

The fruit of the vine, the pure juice of the grape, unfermented, is used as representing the blood of Jesus which was shed for all. Let it be understood that there is a restraint thrown around the Lord’s Supper. Only believers who are striving to follow their Lord in the

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ways of truth and righteousness are to be partakers of the Supper, but on this point Paul says: "Let a man examine himself and let him eat." If a person professes to be a believer, and his life is not known to be contrary to his profession, he has a right to the privileges of the Lord's table.

CHAPTER XXIII

The Trinity

THE Trinity is the unity of three persons in the God-head, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.—*Genesis 1:26; Matthew 3:16, 17; 28:19; John 14:16, 17, 26; 2 Corinthians 13:14.* Perhaps the largest agreement in the Christian world is on this point. Even the Greek and Roman Churches agree as to the truth of the Trinity.—*Matthew 11:27; John 1:1-3; John 17:5; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2.*

The Holy Spirit is a distinct and a divine person.—*Acts 2:16, 17, 25.*

The doctrine of the Trinity is a mystery, but no man can show that it contradicts itself.—*John 1:1.* There is

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joint ownership between them.—*John 16:15*. If Jesus Christ were not God it would be improper to ascribe to Him the perfection of God (*Col. 1:16*), or the worship which is due only to God.—*Heb. 1:6; 1 Peter 3:22*.

The gift of the Holy Ghost.—*Acts 10:44-48; 1 Corinthians 12:6; Colossians 3:11*. The three persons in the Godhead, though distinct, are yet one in purpose, thought and action. The plural is implied in the first sentence in the Bible, and the idea occurs at least 2,500 times in the Scriptures. Often the Father, the Son and the Spirit are classed together. Still as divine they are separate from all other beings.

Every man living is an example of the Trinity. God made man in His own image, and so man has a three-fold na-

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ture,—physical, mental and spiritual. He is one and yet he is three—an image of God. The same idea prevails in nature. The sun is light, heat and body. They all differ, and yet there is the one sun. The idea of the Trinity is yet further emphasized. We have the sun, moon and stars, each differing from the other, and yet they are all one in light. The Unitarian denies the Trinity and professes to believe that Jesus was a mere man. Ask him to illustrate his idea of God from nature, as we have illustrated the idea of the Trinity from nature. He cannot do it. The Bible abounds in argument for the Trinity. Let us see. Get your Bible and examine:

1. You can prove the doctrine of the Trinity from the Bible. See *Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians*

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12:3-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Ephesians 4:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20:21; Revelation 1:4, 5.

2. The divine titles are applied to the three persons.—*John 20:2; Acts 5:3, 4.*

3. Each person in the Trinity is described as eternal.—*Romans 16:26; Revelation 22:13; Hebrews 9:14.*

4. Each person in the Trinity is called Holy.—*Revelation 4:8; 15:4; Acts 3:14; 1 John 2:20.*

5. Each person in the Trinity is called True.—*John 7:28; Rev. 3:7.*

6. Each person is spoken of as Omnipresent.—*Jer. 23:24; Eph. 1:23; Psa. 139:7.*

7. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as Omnipotent.—*Gen. 17:1; Rev. 1:8; Rom. 15:19; Jer. 32:17; Heb. 1:3; Luke 1:35.*

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8. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as Omniscent.—*Acts 15:18; John 21:17; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 11.*

9. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as Creator.—*Gen. 1:1; Col. 1:16; Job 33:4; Psa. 148:5; John 1:3; Job 26:13.*

10. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as Sanctifier.—*Judge 1; Heb. 2:11; 1 Peter 1:2.*

11. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as the Author of all spiritual operations.—*Heb. 13:21; Col. 1:29; 1 Cor. 12:11.*

12. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as the Source of eternal life.—*Rom. 6:23; John 10:28; Gal. 6:8.*

13. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as Teacher.—*Isa. 54:13; Luke 21:15; John 14:26; Isaiah 48:17; Gal. 1:12; 1 John 2:20.*

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14. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as raising Christ from the dead.—*1 Corinthians 6:14; John 2:19; 1 Peter 3:18.*

15. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as inspiring the prophets.—*Heb. 1:1; 2 Corinthians 13:3; Mark 13:11.*

16. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as supplying ministers to the Church.—*Jer. 3:15; Eph. 4:11; Acts 20:28; Jer. 26:5; Matt. 10:5; Acts 13:2.*

17. Each person in the Trinity is spoken of as giving salvation to men.—*2 Thess. 2:13, 14; Titus 3:4-6; 1 Pet. 1:2.*

18. Baptism is spoken of as administered in the name of each person in the Trinity.—*Matt. 28:19.*

19. The benediction is given in the

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name of each person in the Trinity.—
2 Cor. 13:14.

If the Trinity is a false doctrine, what mean all of these scriptures? Till the Unitarians can furnish us with an answer, let us hold fast to the truth as it is given to us in God's Word.

CHAPTEL XXIV

Who Was Melchizedek

WE first read of Melchizedek in Gen. 14:18-20, as follows: "And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thine hand. And he gave him tithes of all."

Later we find him spoken of in Psalms 110:4: "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Next we read of him in Heb. 6:20, and 7:1, 6, 10, as follows: "Whither (within the veil) the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high

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priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him. But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchizedek met him."

Melchizedek was a great personage. To him Abraham gave tithes of all spoils. This great man was not a descendant of the Hebrews, but of the Canaanites. So his appointment was of God, not by inheritance, and so in this respect he was without father and mother. He is indeed priest and king by the appointment of God, having neither beginning of days nor ending of life, but made like unto the Son of God,

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abiding in this holy office continually as a priest. A true figure and type of the Son of God, not as a descendant of Aaron, but by the appointment of God. So every preacher of righteousness should receive his appointment, not by inheritance, but by the call of God. Melchizedek was of a higher order than that of Aaron—his genealogy was not recorded in those of the Jewish priests, having neither beginning of days nor ending of life. Again a type of Christ, not receiving his priestly office from father or mother but from God. He was king because he was priest.

CHAPTER XXV

The Backslider, or Falling From Grace

IT is a law in all nature—life must be fed. It is just as true in the realms of grace. The moral, intellectual and spiritual life of man must be fed, or it cannot grow, and if it does not grow, it cannot be healthy, and if not healthy, it cannot bring forth fruit after its kind. God provides the food His people need. We get it from the Bible, from private communion, from the preaching of the Word and from the worship of God. Two and two cannot make five. Even God Himself cannot save people *in* their sins, but *from* their sins. God will not do anything, indeed He cannot do any-

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thing, that is low and degrading, and for the reason that His nature is opposed to wrong, to sin.

We read in Heb. 6:4-6: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.”

We all need grace to enable us to resist temptation, as Satan is ever seeking whom he may devour. If a man has ever been regenerated he can never get back to the fulness of life in Christ. The Word declares that if one who has been once enlightened, having tasted of

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the good Word of God, and of the powers of the world to come, if such an one falls away, it is impossible to renew him again to repentance.

The truly regenerated man has a new life, and therefore he is a new creature in Christ. If he backslide, he hazards all. If he turn away from his first love, the best he can hope for is to be reinstated, as was the prodigal. The older brother saw in his prodigal brother only a disobedient son, but his father saw in him a reclaimed backslider. A man may be converted every time he comes to see the error of his way. In conversion the man turns himself to the right ways of the Lord. In regeneration the converted man is given a new life in Christ. If one fall away from this new life and he goes on in sin till the heart is thoroughly hardened, so that the Holy

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Spirit can make no impression there-upon through the Word, such an one is given up indeed, for when the Spirit of God can no longer reach the heart, nothing else can. Unbelief and hardness of heart destroy the capacities of faith, and when faith is destroyed the man is like a drifting ship which has no power to direct its course.

If Paul understood the fact, then there is danger of losing this hope in Christ, danger of reaching a point in human destiny when it is impossible to renew the lost experience. God Himself has said: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." When the Spirit's striving with man ceases, he is unloosed from the moorings of the divine life. If the Spirit has given up a soul, who shall arrest him and bring him back to repentance? Having cru-

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cified the Son of God afresh and put Him to an open shame, in driving the Spirit away, how shall such an one be reclaimed? Even the preaching of the gospel can do nothing for the lost in the absence of the power of the Holy Spirit. So it seems that Paul was right—when the Spirit leaves a man, his doom is sealed for eternity.

CHAPTER XXVI

Restoration

"**R**ESTORE unto me the joy of thy salvation."—*Psa. 51:12.* Man fell from his first state of innocence. One of the great works of God has been the restoration, or the recovery of man from the curse of that fall. Restoration is essential to everlasting happiness. The whole human family is divided into two classes. One class is made up of the men and women who have been restored by grace to be the sons and daughters of God. The other is made of the men and women who have chosen to live in sin and serve under the dominion of Satan. Jesus taught us that we cannot serve two masters. There

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are two states of the human family. One is preparing for Heaven. The other is made of the men and women who have chosen to live in sin and serve under the dominion of Satan. Let us not forget that we cannot serve two masters. There are two states of the human family. One is preparing for Heaven. The other is preparing for Hell. Both roads are open to men—they must decide which way they will go. Life's journey is before us. It is short and uncertain at the best. Our destiny is sealed by the road we travel. If we walk in the way of the Lord, we must serve Him in spirit and in truth. The service of the Lord is a joy to the believer. In the Lord's service is the path of peace, leading to pleasures forever more. This pleasure belongs to the child of God. If one leave his first love,

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he must come back and begin again to walk in the narrow way.

Man's first and highest duty is to seek freedom from sin, from envy, malice, unkindness, hatred and love of evil. If we have malice in our hearts, we cannot render acceptable service to God. Listen to Jesus: In Matt. 5:23, 24, we read:

"Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."

If we have lost the way of life we must come back to the point from which we have deviated. We must seek to be reinstated. Malice in the mind and heart will destroy the light we have, and

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our darkness will be great. If we are guilty of sin that sin must be renounced and given up through repentance. If we defraud others, we must restore at least four-fold. Zaccheus did that. Wrong *must be* set right.

CHAPTER XXVII

Hope

HOPES is a desire for good, expecting to obtain it. Confidence is assurance in some future event or fact, accompanying more or less uncertainty, and yet with enough evidence to hope—to expect. It infuses strength and lessens the doubt and burden of the way. It is a compound of desire and expectation, of happiness and patience, waiting for the realization of that for which we are hoping.—*Rom. 8:24, 25; 1 John 3:2, 3.*

True hope is the gift of God.—*1 Pet. 1:3.*

Hope makes us not ashamed.—*Rom. 5:5.*

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Hope is given to the heart which has been cleansed from all sin.—*2 Thess. 2:16.*

The Christian's hope is distinct from that of the hypocrite.—It is called a lively hope in *1 Peter 1:3*, being the outgrowth of true spiritual life.

This hope also gives encouragement and support in a dying hour.—*Prov. 14:32.*

In *Heb. 6:9*, hope is said to be sure, because it rests on a sure foundation.—*Rom. 5:2.*

The Christian has a safe basis for his hope. It rests in—

GOD—*Psa. 39:7; 1 Pet. 1:21.*

CHRIST—*1 Cor. 15:19; 1 Timothy 1:1.*

HOLY SPIRIT—*Rom. 15:13; Gal. 5:5.*

THE MERCY OF GOD—*Psa. 33:18.*

This hope is obtained through—

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GRACE—*2 Thess. 2:16.*

THE WORD—*Psa. 119:81.*

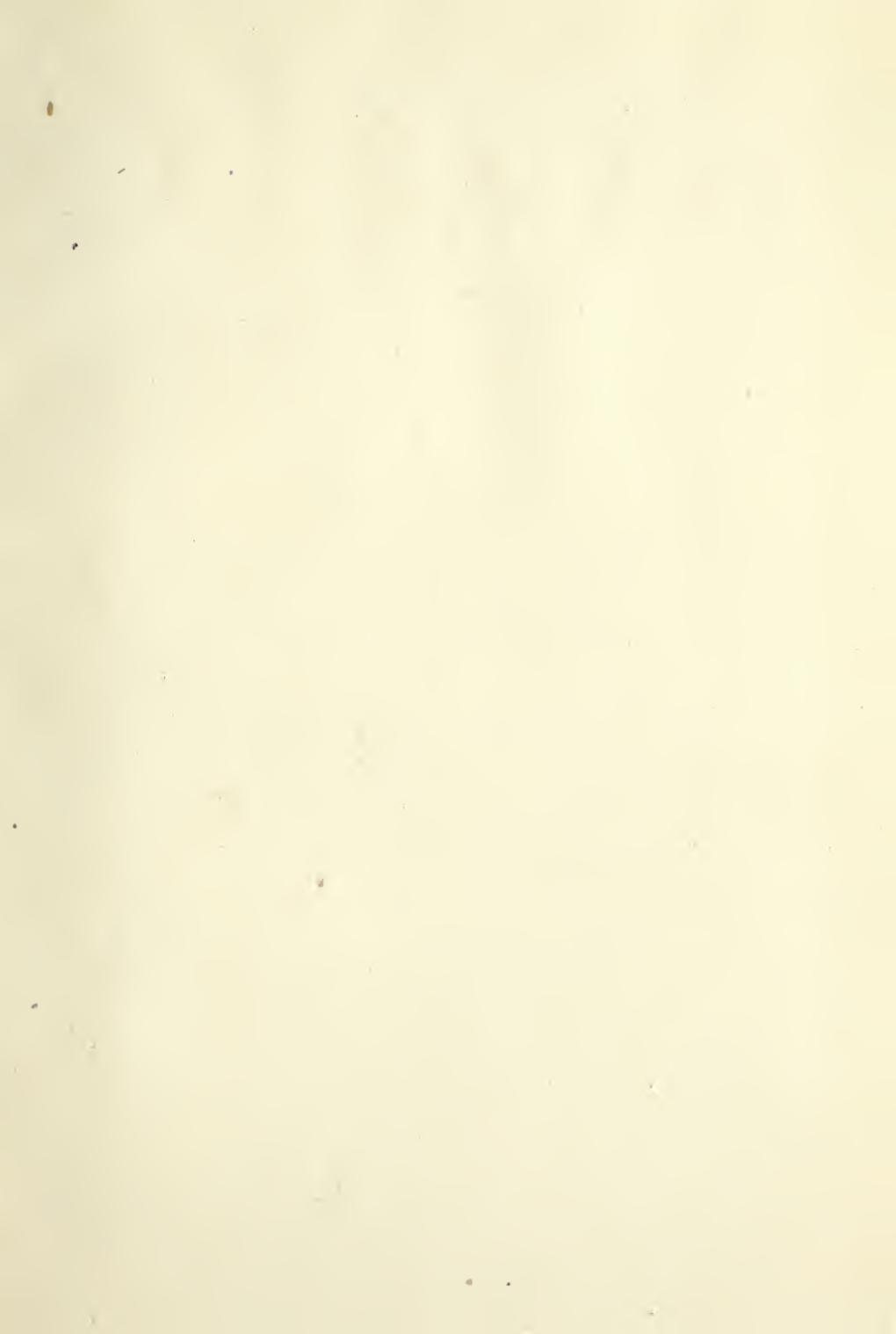
PATIENCE AND COMFORT—*Rom. 15:4.*

THE GOSPEL—*Col. 1:5; 23.*

FAITH—*Rom. 5:1, 2.*

EXPERIENCE—*Rom. 5:4.*

CHRIST—*Heb. 7:19.*



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